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CONFISCATION

CONSIDERED;

OR

DOUBTS ON THE PROPRIETY

OF

PLUNDERING OUR FRIENDS.

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CONFISCATION

CONSIDERED.

AT a season of danger, like the present, when our ploughs stand still, from the want of hands to conduct them; and we look, even to the third and fourth forms of the seminaries of Eaton and Westminster, for heroes to command our armies; it cannot, surely, be thought presumptuous if those, who are too old to become warriors, should commence politicians, and endeavour to contribute their quota of service to the state, with the productions of their pens; for as every man owes something to society, he is a bad citizen who does not attempt to discharge it, in one way or other. Under this idea I have turned my attention to some proceedings in the West Indies which appear to call for animadversion; and here present the public with the result of my remarks.

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It appears that the war with the French Republic, having been declared early in the year 1793, his Majesty's Ministers, very naturally, turned their attention to their Sugar Colonies, as to the most vulnerable part of their dominions ; and, consequently, the most likely to be attacked with success ; as well on account of the civil disturbances which had prevailed there, in common with the rest of the empire, ever since the commencement of the Revolution, as from the state in which they had been left with respect to military force, the cares of the Convention having been occupied with an interest of greater moment, in the defence of their home frontiers, against the assaults of the Coalition.

The fleet and army, destined for the attack of the French Islands, were confided to Admiral Gardiner and General Bruce ; and though manifestly too small for the service, on any other occasion, were thought not incompetent to the object on the present, when the garrison of Fort Bourbon, the only post of considerable strength in the Islands, consisted but of a few hundred men, undisciplined, insubordinate, and wanting of every species of stores necessary to enable them to oppose an effectual resistance. It was at the same time well known to the Ministry,

nistry, from the information of agents, commissioned by the Islands with whom the attack was concerted, that the British army might depend not only on the assistance of the planters, but, also, of many of the military and navy, who, persisting in their loyalty to their Sovereign, had been obliged to leave the French Islands, and take refuge in those of the English. Among these were many officers of distinguished merit; particularly the Comte de Behague, their Governor, an old Lieutenant General, who had been selected by his Court, while the Court was permitted to exist, as a person with whom so important a command might safely be confided; and he proved himself not unworthy of the trust, or his former reputation: as he had, with the assistance of the planters and their slaves, and a few of the grenadiers of the army (the only part of the soldiery who preserved their allegiance) defeated the insurgents in several actions, and long maintained his ground; though at length obliged to abandon it to an irresistible superiority.

As this war, notwithstanding the complexion which Ministers and their adherents had affected to give it, was well known to have been provoked and undertaken for the destruction of the Republican system, and the restoration of

Monarchy, more than for the extension of dominion, it was conceived that the Colonies, dependant on France, could not, compatibly with that system, be taken other ways than provisionally, to be restored, if the Monarchy was established, and the expences of their capture paid; if not, to remain in perpetuity to Great Britain. Such was said to have been the arrangement negotiated between the British Ministry and those who represented the interests of the French Colonies : but if it was, soon did the first honourable impulse of nature yield to the suggestions of a more sinister policy.

It is beyond the purpose of these pages, which have a farther object than to narrate events, to enter into an historical detail of this expedition, which commenced auspiciously enough, with the unresisted debarkation of the troops in the Island of Martinico : nor were they fortunate only in landing without opposition, for though they remained several days in the island, their good fortune still accompanied them, in keeping them from the sight of the enemy, and in bringing them safely on board their ships again, with little other loss than what was occasioned by the unfortunate encounter of two bodies of the Allies, who had fired upon each other in the dark ; a mistake but too common in the nocturnal movements of an army.

Thus

Thus did this expedition miscarry! and why it miscarried it is not easy for me to explain, not being in the secret of affairs; and not having been able to collect, either from the official communications which have been given to the public, or the private reports of those who witnessed the transaction, any thing like a reason why it did not succeed: on the contrary, from both we have grounds for astonishment at the troops re-imbarking without effecting their object; there appearing, from every circumstance, but a feeble enemy to oppose them; whilst the French planters, and the military who had been promised, faithful to their engagement, presented in great numbers to support and co-operate with us. However, be that as it may, the expedition failed, and the fleet returned from whence they came, carrying with them a great number of the ruined inhabitants, who having taken arms, and declared in our favour, were unwilling to hazard the operation of the guillotine; and therefore abandoned their properties to the resentment of the enraged patriots.

A very little of political observation is necessary to convince us of the propriety of suspending our judgment on an event such as this; for, though appearances may be unfavourable to the Commander, yet without a knowledge of the orders

orders under which he acted, it is impossible for us to decide whether his conduct was reprehensible or not: nothing being more at variance than the real and the visible purpose of that class of men called Statesmen, who generally affect obliquities, and never think their wisdom manifested but when they seek their object through a circuitous road. Upon the present occasion, there seems to be no good ground to impute blame to the gentlemen charged with the expedition, however strange their proceedings might have been; for as they have long since returned, and their conduct has never been questioned by those who sent them, we ought to presume that the object of their mission was fulfilled; and that whatever blame there is, ought to attach to their employers.

This interpretation seems peculiarly proper when we extend our views a little beyond it, to events which have since succeeded, equally strange, and much more criminal.

The ardour of Ministers for West Indian conquests being nothing abated by their former ill success in that quarter, another and a larger army, and another and a larger fleet, commanded by officers who ranked high in public estimation, were dispatched towards the end of the year

1793,

1793, and arrived there in good season to commence their operations, which they did with vigour, and pursued them with uncommon energy and success. Battery fell after battery, and we were not afraid to look at the enemy, though covered by walls and great guns. All the towns and the country of Martinique were soon possessed by our troops; and we find Sir Charles Grey and his little army safely established in the redoubtable Fort Bourbon, before the end of March.

There being much more to be done, no time was lost in setting about it. Saint Lucie was taken soon after, with little opposition, as was Guadeloupe, the smaller Islands giving none at all; the republican garrisons being weak as they had been represented, and such of the inhabitants as had any property to interest them in the welfare of the Islands, being attached to the British cause, and cordially disposed to lend every assistance in putting them under our dominion.

But little, however, was the service they were permitted to afford: for though, upon the arrival of Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis, a numerous corps of persecuted Frenchmen, who had been fugitives in the British Islands ever since the former abortive attempt on Martinico, and
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who were bound to us by the most forcible of all ties, that of interest, and had consequently looked to the arrival of the British fleet, as to the period of their persecutions, offered to join the army, and to co-operate towards the attainment of its object ; their offer was rejected, and they were not even permitted to accompany the fleet, to give a premature look to their possessions, which their former zeal in our service had forced them to abandon.

The refusal was unlooked for, it never having entered into their calculations, as a possible circumstance, that the aid of a numerous body of men, who were interested in our success, by having their all dependent upon it, and who were well qualified to advance it by their local knowledge of the island ; and by their martial ardour, which had been excited and disciplined in a two year's contest with their oppressors, and who had besides a decisive influence on the minds of the slaves, could be rejected as auxiliaries to an army that appeared disproportionate to its object : however, it was rejected, and we who saw no bad motive for the rejection, from our partiality to the Commanders, inferred wisdom, and supposed it to arise from an apprehension that the appearance of the French Royalists might determine the republican garrison to a more obstinate resistance.

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Time, however, which rectifies many errors, has corrected that also, and unfolded the real motives of the refusal, which being of a less honourable kind, will be commented upon in its proper place.

Before I advance farther in my narrative, it may not be improper to pause a little, in order to review a proclamation issued by the two Commanders in Chief, Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis, and bearing date the first day of the last year, when they were on their passage to the West Indies : so that it appears to have been the composition of leisure, and as it announces purposes very laudable, it cannot be omitted without injustice ; and the more particularly so, as it is the only one of that complexion. The proclamation, with others which were published afterwards, may possibly be in the hands of most of my readers ; yet as I propose to make frequent references to them, I shall make no apology for subjoining them as documents in an Appendix, to which the reader may occasionally turn, to verify the accuracy of my citations.

The proclamation No. I. being in the style of a manifesto, sets out with stating the motives to the war in general, and the particular motives which determined his Majesty to employ a force

“ to subdue the adherents of the pretended National Convention, and to rescue the Island of Martinico from the misfortunes and oppression under which it groans.”

In conformity to that object, and doubtless to facilitate its attainment, the Commanders in Chief proceed to “ invite all the friends of Peace, Government, Religion and Order, in the Island of Martinico, to shake off the yoke of a tyrannical oppression, and to shelter themselves, from the horrors of anarchy, under the protection and government of a just and benevolent Sovereign.”

To encourage them to do so, they are solemnly promised and assured “ *of a full and immediate enjoyment of all their lawful property, according to their ancient laws and customs, and on the most advantageous terms.*”

Thus did they hold forth, in the style of lovers soliciting for indulgence, magnificent promises of future gratitude and kindness; and like lovers, too, no sooner were they gratified in the possession of their object, than they forgot their engagements, and tyrannised over those who had submitted to their embraces.

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It must appear, however, to all who shall attentively peruse this proclamation, that there resulted from it not only an equitable obligation in honour, but also in law, to restore to the full and immediate enjoyment of their properties all such of the inhabitants of Martinico as should shake off the yoke imposed on them by their enemies, and shelter themselves under the protection of a just and benevolent Sovereign. The manifesto must not be considered as our Commanders seem disposed to consider it, as a piece of waste paper, of no force or validity; on the contrary, it has great legal force, as hath been already decided in the case of Campbell against the Collectors of Grenada, by the judgment of the Court of King's Bench, delivered by the late Lord Mansfield, after a solemn argument; when it was held, that the King may, by proclamation, divest himself of a prerogative which he has acquired, as he did in that particular case, which referred to the duty of four and a half per cent. levied in virtue of the imagined existing prerogative, on the exports of the islands ceded to Great Britain at the peace of 1763, after the King had abandoned it in his proclamation; though that abandonment had been made by implication only, and not in express words. It appears, therefore, that though the King might have possessed the right of disposing of all the

property in the Island of Martinico, or in other words, of confiscating it, because it was taken by assault and force of arms, as the Victors termed it, (a proposition extremely controvertible) in case he had not issued such a proclamation ; yet having once issued it, he was bound by it, as by a sacred compact, entered into between him and those who were to become his subjects ; though the capitulation was destitute of the formality of reciprocal signatures, the well known circumstances of the Island not admitting of it. The only question then that remains to be considered, is, whether the French inhabitants did conduct themselves in a manner that entitled them to the benefits promised in that proclamation, or otherwise ? that is, whether they took arms to oppose the invasion of the King's troops.

It has been observed before, and the fact (if necessary) is capable of being proved by a multiplicity of evidence, that a great many of the French inhabitants of Martinico, who were in the English Islands, were desirous of joining our army, and of contributing towards the reduction of the Island ; but that their offers were rejected, and there is great reason to presume that such of them as remained at home at the time of the attack, and had any property, were well-wishers to us, and secretly, if not openly abetted our cause ;
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which was their's also ; property having long been with them, as in the mother country, a title to proscription. But besides the positive evidence which may be produced of their favourable disposition toward the English, we have the strongest negative proof of their not acting in the defence of the Island, in the facility with which it was overrun by our troops ; and the ease with which the fort Bourbon yielded to an army not so strong by half, as it ought to have been, in the opinion of scientific men, for the capture of so respectable a fortress, had it been defended by a competent garrison ; but the official return will prove that that consisted only of a very few regulars, and a rabble mass of necessitous Whites, Negroes, and Malattoes, almost literally Sans Culots, all without a single man of property or character among them, at least not one that ever I heard of; yet there, and there only, was any considerable defence made : and that which was attempted elsewhere in the other parts of the Island, was always by persons of the same description, who, after a two year's struggle, had gained a preponderance over the opulent part of the community, and pressed them down with a rod of iron.

These premises considered, I think it will hardly be maintained, that the French planters and men of property in the Island were foreclosed of any
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part of their claims to the benefits of the proclamation, by a conduct opposed to his Majesty's wishes and the British interest ; but that, on the contrary, it will be admitted, they had every title not only to the possession of, but to the full fruition of their properties, that could result from the guarantee of the King's sacred name, from their past misfortunes, and present difficulties, arising from the immensity of their losses.

Would to God ! that these considerations had had their due weight with those who were charged with the conduct of this business, that the British character might have been preserved from the disgrace that now attaches to it. But alas ! how little did actions correspond with engagements ! No sooner were we established in our conquest than plunder became the order of the day : not that ferocious and desultory plunder which proceeds from the unbridled violence of a victorious soldiery, rushing in pursuit of a vanquished foe, with wounds still reeking from their resistance ; but a systematic pillage, adjusted with all the decorum of discipline, and the forms of a regular polity, long after the passions had subsided to their former level.

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The first piece that appeared on that head, is the order, Appendix No. II. signed by Major General Dundas, the Commandant of St. Pierre, requiring from the inhabitants within the circumference of that town, an exact, true, and verified specification of the colonial productions, and provisions of every kind and quality, under pain of imprisonment "and confiscation of the goods not declared."

With this order no great fault was to be found, if it had been intended, as at the first sight it appears to be, only to ascertain the mass, and to protect it from illicit depredation; for, as it threatens confiscation only in case of their not being specified, it was to be presumed, that upon the requisition being complied with, the goods were secure to the owners.

But the declaration, Appendix No. III. signed W. Myers, seems to speak another language; and to suggest doubts of the ulterior purpose of the former military order; for after promising that consideration being had to the decay and waste to which several of the articles included in the specification made in consequence of the above order are subject, and the solicitations of the town and country, with respect to provisions, permission was granted to the persons who had declared

declared their goods, to sell such of the perishable articles as were enumerated in a subjoined list, and at the prices stated in the tariff; on the express condition that they shall remain amenable to the prize agents, and account, as often as they shall be required, for the value thereof.

Seven days after the above benevolent permission had been given to the store-keepers, to dispose of their perishable goods, on account of the prize agents, appeared an advertisement, Appendix No. IV. announcing a public sale by auction, of all the vessels, commodities, provisions, and other articles, which were, at that time, or should be afterwards seized in the Island of Martinico; and inviting the inhabitants of the other Islands to attend the sale. This advertisement bears date the 18th day of March, and though it does not expressly state, that they were to be sold on account of the captors, it leaves but little doubt of that being the intention; but if any doubt at all remained, it was effectually done away by the proclamation, Appendix No. V. signed Robert Prescott, which speaks out in very plain terms; and acquaints us that Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis “ having resolved that all the provisions and “ other articles heretofore declared to the agents “ of

“ of seizure in the town of Saint Pierre, shall
 “ be publicly sold for the benefit of those who
 “ have seized them ; all persons having made
 “ such declarations are hereby ordered, as soon
 “ as the aforesaid Agents shall require it, to
 “ deliver up the provisions and other articles
 “ thus declared ; and all persons that have hi-
 “ therto neglected to make such declarations,
 “ are also ordered, at their risk and peril, to
 “ make them without any further delay.”

Thus the design of the first order issued the
 18th of February by General Dundas, enjoin-
 ing a general declaration of goods, was fully
 developed ; and though the terms in which
 it was couched, encouraged a hope that con-
 fiscation, being only the penalty of contumacy,
 was to be obviated by submission, yet it ap-
 pears that such hopes were delusive and falla-
 cious, and that it was from the first designed to
 involve in the same common penalty those who
 did, and those who did not comply with the
 order : a conduct bearing the stamp of insult-
 ing mockery.

The proclamation and orders, on which I
 have hitherto animadverted, though sufficiently
 rigorous, form, however, a part only of a much
 wider and more extensive system of rapine,

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which now unfolded itself, it being determined that the valour, the excessive fatigues, and their consequences, sickness and mortality, and the heavy expences incurred by the British officers and soldiers, who, with unshaken firmness and matchless perseverance, atchieved the conquest of the Island, was not to be paid with so pitiful a compensation, as the plunder of the town of Saint Pierre ; another mode was devised of raising a sum somewhat more commensurate to the signal services of the Army and Navy, and a proclamation was issued for that purpose by * Lieutenant General Prescott, Governor and Commander in Chief of the Island of Martinico and its dependencies, bearing date the 10th of May, 1794, Appendix No. VII. requiring the inhabitants, of the different quarters of the Island, to assemble and elect by ballot a deputy for every parish to represent them in assembly, “ for
 “ the purpose of fixing, in an equitable and effi-
 “ cacious manner, a general contribution (the
 “ amount of which shall be made known to
 “ the representatives of each parish) to be paid
 “ by all those who possess property in the Co-
 lony ;

* In using the name of that Officer, I desire not to be understood as intimating that he was the author of any act of rigour whatever, the public voice of the Islands fully exculpating him, and speaking highly of his humanity and good conduct in his command.

“ lony ; the Commanders in Chief having decided that such an arrangement would be much more convenient *than a general confiscation.*”

This proclamation, it would seem, had not all the regard paid to it to which it was intitled ; it being found necessary to reinforce it with one more peremptory, under the signatures of the Commanders in Chief, Sir Charles Grey and Sir John Jervis, Appendix No. VII. of much the same import, though more detailed as to the motives for levying the contribution, and the means of effecting it. This curious piece, which exhibits an edifying formula for all future Commanders who may be charged with Colonial Expeditions, is hardly susceptible of compression, without having its merit greatly impaired, and therefore must be perused in the original with great attention. The reader will there discover that the assembly was convoked to deliberate on the most equitable and efficacious means of raising “ *a sum of money adequate to the value of the conquest,*” though it does not expressly state whether that sum was to be equal to the fee simple of the Island. They demand it not only as conquerors, but as a debt of gratitude due to them as being the preservers of the greatest number of the inhabitants from a
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wretched

wretched exile, and their restorers to the quiet possession of their property. The procrastination, however, of this very interesting business had occasioned some little inconvenience, as it had prevented many of the well disposed inhabitants from carrying their commodities to market, to procure, by the sale of them, the necessities of life ; that is, though they were admitted to the possession of their property, they were prohibited from making use of it to purchase a barrel of beef, or a barrel of flour, until this claim was first satisfied. In order, therefore, to remove the evil, a well digested plan was laid down for assessing and apportioning the contribution, and the inhabitants were told that “ the Commanders in Chief having, on their “ part, manifested their *ardent wish* to adopt the “ *mildest measures*, declare herewith, that it is “ their firm resolution to have this present measure fully executed, or on failure of it, to “ avail themselves of *the power with which they “ are invested, to order and enforce a general confiscation.*”

Thus we see, that the captors assert their right to all the property in the Island, personal and territorial, and announce a determination to make use of it, if the inhabitants did not immediately accede to the compromise tendered to them.

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The right of a conqueror we know to be very great, for it is co-extensive with his power, which reaches to the extremity of his sword ; and we need not the authority of Vattel, or Gro-tius, or any of the writers on the Laws of War and of Nations, to inform us that places or towns, taken with force of arms, and by assault, have experienced the merciless rage of the assailants, in every shape wherein brutal passion could manifest itself, whether of rape, rapine, or of murder. Formerly such abuses of victory were too frequent to astonish ; and their frequency established a series of precedents which became the common law of the military profession. It was, therefore, long, held that the inhabitants and property of a place taken without a capitulation might be disposed of, at the discretion of the captors ; but, excepting the few instances which have occurred in the progress of the Russian arms, where the ferocious and detestable Souarrow was invested with the command, modern times know nothing of that principle ; at least it hath not been recognized in the practice of those who direct the motions of disciplined armies : for even in extreme cases, such as towns taken by assault, after a long siege, and an obstinate resistance, which might (if any thing could) authorise the rigorous application of this maxim, though the gar-
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rison may, sometimes, suffer after resistance ceases, yet we never hear of their being exterminated, or that the carnage long continues after the capture is well assured ; much less do we hear of women and children being involved in the proscription, and delivered to the sword of the furious assassin. Even property is, in a great degree, respected ; and though a pillage may ensue, it has its limits, and seldom exceeds a few hours duration. Contributions, indeed, have been levied, and no man ever made a greater use of that resource, for the recruiting of his exhausted finances, than a late Prussian monarch, whose extensive capacity and military exploits may excite the admiration of posterity, as they have done ours ; but who will never be proposed as a very correct pattern of equity.

But though the term Contribution be not of recent origin, it has always been used to imply a sum levied on the country of an enemy, for the purpose of the State ; and we of this State know, practically, very little of it ; neither our Armies nor our Ministers having hitherto, as I conceive, been in the habit of resorting to that mode of supplying the ways and means for the prosecution of offensive war. If a contribution, therefore, is to be levied by precedent, we should

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keep strictly within the precedent, which only authorises its being raised for the country, and not for the use of the army of that country, because they have done their duty, and fought well, and conquered. The Frederician code, though little scrupulous in other points, gives no authority to generals to exact contributions for the enriching of their own purses. Ours is therefore an improvement on the practice of Frederick; and the present is, I believe, the first instance, either on record or in memory, of a contribution raised, by regular assessment, for recompensing the services of an army. It appears, therefore, more correct to call this act of taking a man's money, without his consent, by the more appropriate name of Pillage than Contribution; and then we shall find many precedents to sanctify it. Angria, the famous Oriental pirate, was a distinguished operator in that way by sea, as are the Arabs of the Desert by land at this day.

It may indeed be urged, that this contribution was only proposed as a *mild measure*, and as a commutation and forbearance of a much more extensive claim, a claim to all the property in the Island in right of conquest. But if the claim did not arise from a mistake in the nature of the subject, by supposing the Island of Martinico

tinico, as it floats on the ocean, to be a great ship, and therefore liable to condemnation, it must have arisen from a mistake in the right of conquest, which, so far as it affects the subject in question, I shall now examine.

It is notorious to the world, that though we of this country are at war with France, we are not at war with the French as a nation, but with a certain part of that nation, the Anti-Royalists and Republicans. As to those who remain attached to Royalty, and are under prosecution for sentiments adverse to the existing order of things in France, we profess ourselves their allies and co-operators in the grand work of restoring to them their King, their former laws, and hereditary possessions; and our zeal for the attainment of those objects has been too unequivocally manifested, to leave a doubt of its sincerity;—witness the enormous expenditure in the war!—the hospitable asylum afforded to the unfortunate Emigrants, by which this country enobles itself—a Priesthood, hitherto deemed adverse to the public peace, cherished and relieved, without creating even the murmurs of the populace; and a military arrayed and regimented in our service and pay, without exciting the jealousy of our national troops. These are traits in the national character which we shall review, and
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and the Manifesto, Appendix, No. I. declaring that his Majesty "has thought it convenient and
 " necessary, by force of arms, to subdue the
 " adherents of the pretended National Conven-
 " tion, and to rescue the Island of Martinico
 " from the misfortunes and oppression under
 " which it groans."—His Majesty, therefore, could not mean, after having subdued the adherents of the Convention, against whom alone hostilities were directed, to aggravate the miseries, and to increase the oppressions of the Royalist inhabitants, who were the friends of peace, order, and good government, and who had been invited to put themselves under his protection.—He could not mean, after they had been promised, in his name, " a full and immediate enjoyment of all their lawful property, according to their ancient laws and customs, that all their property should be confiscated, unless redeemed at a purchase *adequate to the value of the conquest.* His Majesty's name, as well as his authority, must have been greatly abused in this business. It could never have been his intention that the peaceable and well-disposed planters, after having been robbed of their garments by their own rabble, should be despoiled of their skins by our soldiers, as a recompence for their " matchless perseverance." In short, so great a variance do we find between

the first Proclamation and the eighth, that we are astonished at meeting the same signatures to them ;—the one tendering benefits and protection, and avowing the rescue of the oppressed inhabitants as the purpose of the attack ;—the other telling them that the price of the services of the British army was a sum of money adequate to the value of the conquest ; and that unless that demand was complied with, “ *a general confiscation would be ordered and enforced.*”

Does the history of the worst times exhibit a transaction more pregnant with perfidy ?—The case of St. Eustatius, above referred to, was found to be a national disgrace ; yet was it, beyond all comparison, less so than the late proceedings at Martinico. For though we had complaints to allege against the Dutch, and what we called injuries to avenge, yet were they not inveigled by an insidious Proclamation to surrender, and under a promise of being protected in their properties. They were approached with ruffian menace, which had somewhat of honesty, if not humanity in it, and were given to understand that they had the worst to expect that rapacity could inflict. The case was totally different at Martinico ; we had no injuries to complain of against the better class of the inhabitants ; we appeared as their allies. Our language spoke beneficence—

beneficence—our conduct manifested oppression.

My observations have been hitherto confined to the Island of Martinico, because that was the first subdued, and that to which the Manifesto was specially addressed ; but there can be no doubt, as the same motives existed in the other islands, that the same hopes were to be created, and the same measures pursued. At St. Lucia, our troops met with no resistance, but at the *Morne Fortune*, from a feeble garrison of about eighty or a hundred men ; who, as report says, paid dear for their temerity, by being all put to the sword. The more respectable Colonists invited our approach, and rejoiced in our success, from which they hoped to reap a benefit : and so they did in an equal degree with their neighbours of Martinico. The same may be said of Guadaloupe ; we met with very little opposition, yet we took that also by assault, because we did not chuse to take by capitulation. If less was done there than elsewhere, it was because we had not time to do much. The measures preparatory to the levying of a contribution were taken ; their sugars were attached in their boiling houses, and they were prohibited from making use of them ;—but the Republicans interposed and deranged the plan, by removing

the seals, and applying the plunder to their own use.

In reviewing the proceedings of our army in the French Islands, and comparing them with those of the French, in the last war, in ours, when less propitious events had put them into their possession, I feel humbled by a comparison so disgraceful to the British name, and so honourable to that of France.

The first Island, that fell to the enemy, was Dominica. An expedition of the Marquis de Bouillé reduced it without bloodshed ; for it had both a weak garrison and weak defence. His strength was sufficient to have enforced an unconditional submission ;—yet he granted a capitulation sufficiently liberal, and observed it with honour, for plunder was not his plan.

St. Vincent fell soon after, to a detachment of the army of the Count D'Estaing ; and a capitulation was granted there also, which was not quite so honourably fulfilled as the former ; yet the inhabitants, even in their own opinions, had no very weighty causes of complaint.

A short interval elapsed, before Granada was taken by Monsieur D'Estaing. He assaulted the
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the retrenched hill, which commands the Fort, in person, and carried it; upon which the Fort, to which Lord Macartney, the Governor, had retreated, surrendered at discretion. The garrison and the country, were therefore at the disposal of the conquerors; but did they greatly abuse their rights? Were contributions of enormous magnitude leveid on the inhabitants, or their property confiscated? Neither! they were terrified, but not greatly injured.—Even under an officer, whose decided aversion to the name of an Englishman was well known, they experienced but few vexations. Whatever other passions had taken possession of his bosom, a cupidity of wealth was not to be found among them. It was not a French vice.

Tobago was taken by the Marquis de Bouillé, and though the conquest cost him some little trouble, he did not refuse a capitulation, which was religiously observed; so much so, that when one of the British inhabitants had received, what he imagined to be an injury, from the local Governor, he begged leave to pursue him, in the courts of justice in the island, according to the English law, which they were permitted to enjoy.

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After some interval, St. Christopher fell also, after a siege, and a breach made in the walls of the citadel ; yet the Marquis de Bouillé granted not only a capitulation, almost such as was desired by the garrison, but spontaneously annexed to it an additional article respecting their commerce, which was highly advantageous to the inhabitants, and such as they could hardly have hoped for. He did not think of appropriating the sugars, and other produce of the colony, to recompense the fatigues of such of his army as were left alive at the end of the siege, or to pay for those that were dead. He was only anxious to secure to them the means of disposing of their property to the most advantage. Mountserrat and Nevis, though in a state totally defenceless, were, nevertheless, taken and treated with the same lenity. Even the vessels afloat in the ports and harbours of the different Islands, and their contents, which have ever been considered by us as incontestible plunder, if claimed by the inhabitants as their property, were delivered up to them. It would appear as if this Marquis de Bouillé only took Islands for the barren honour of the thing, and maliciously to evince that he could be as liberal as our own officers were rapacious !

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The consequence was, that he was not ashamed, at the conclusion of the war, to shew his face in this capital, where he was entertained by our Merchants and Planters, as a generous Enemy, a title no less respectable than that of Friend, and a sword was presented to him in testimony of their gratitude, with an assurance that it would never be abused for the oppression of a vanquished foe. The honourable warfare which he waged against us, and his mild use of the rights of victory, in the brighter days of his life, will insure some comfort to his generous soul in the present reverse of his fortune.

Comparisons, it is said, are odious, and I feel them so, in a great degree, when employed in contrasting the conduct of the French and British armies, as displayed in the West-Indies; for in one I see an anxious endeavour to mitigate the rigours of war; an abstinence from spoil, and a wish to reconcile, by indulgencies, the inhabitants of the conquered Islands to the inevitable severities of their fate. In the other I see every thing that is unpleasant to behold, relate, or remember; an avidity for money, insulting triumph, and revolting vexations.

The Proclamations annexed, I consider as undeniable evidence of the facts which I have advanced,

vanced, as they have never been disavowed, though long since published to the world; and it is from that source I have drawn the materials that have hitherto supplied me with subject of animadversion. As to other facts, that might be mentioned in detail, of the rigour with which the French have been treated, I forbear them, as they stand on more questionable ground of authority; though, being the reports of individuals, who either are arrived, or have written from the Islands, and who pretend to report only what passed under their eyes, they may justly lay claim to some degree of credit; yet as passion may inflame, or misrepresent that which is too bad to stand in need of aggravation, I do not think it necessary to give them a place here. Thus much, however, I must say, I never yet saw any man, or any letter, from the West Indies, be the situation of the person what it would, that did not reprobate the exactions of the army, in the harshest terms that language could supply. When I speak of the army, I mean the Chiefs of the army and navy, under whose authority they were demanded, though without presuming to charge the blame of those transactions even on them, until time and an inquiry, which I trust will be soon instituted, shall decide whether they acted by order, and under instructions, or of their own motion; it
being

being difficult to conceive that gentlemen, who have hitherto ranked so high, both for their civil and military virtues, could suddenly elapse from that eminence of character, to indulge in a sordid system of speculation. The acts were certainly merciless in the extreme, unjust, and impolitic. For what could be more inhuman than to demand of the wretched, who had been deprived of the produce of their estates for three years, either altogether or in great part, a contribution which their means did not permit them to pay, and to attach their effects until the demand was complied with, though they had no way of procuring necessaries either for themselves, their negroes, or their estates, but by the sale of the little produce which circumstances had left them? What more unjust, than to despoil of their property those who had fled to us for protection, and whom we went to defend, though they had never taken arms to oppose us; but on the contrary, had acted openly in our favour, and had smarted in consequence of it, from the persecution of their opponents? And what more impolitic than to inflict injuries which may ultimately be retorted on ourselves?

If the principle of the right of confiscation, which hath been asserted by these gentlemen, should be left uncontradicted by Parliament, after what

has been done to enforce it, in what a situation will our own Colonies stand, in case of a future rupture with France, when the convulsions which now agitate that nation shall disappear, and they shall again find themselves in circumstances to prosecute an offensive war in the West Indies? Perhaps the period is not very distant, when they may be in a situation to do so, and to practise reprisals. They are already strong in that quarter, and past experience proves that the energy of their government is incalculable, as well as the imbecility of ours. Is it to be supposed, that the generosity of their Chiefs will forever resist provocation, and that they will not be induced to retaliate on such of the Islands as may fall under their dominion? If their nature should continue abhorrent, from the system of spoliation, and they should still disdain to imitate our example, as the Marquis de Bouillé did when he retook St. Eustatius, and restored to the Governor six thousand pounds which he claimed as his property, it is what our Colonies have no right to expect. On the contrary, they should henceforward look to severe reprisals, and expect to pay, with interest, for the extortions of their own Generals.—But, alas! frivolous would be the argument built on the future welfare of the Sugar Colonies, if one more cogent did not present, to interest the inhabitants

habitants of this country in the question. Unfortunately the danger is not confined to the other extremity of the world. It is at our own doors. Are *we* safe from the attacks of our enemy, when that enemy triumphs over all Europe combined, and has already added to her own extensive dominions, others almost as extensive? Flanders and Holland are at her feet; their ports, their seamen, and their marine, at her disposal. Spain also courts her grasp, and we may possibly, in a few months, find her fleet recreant from the common cause, and have to combat, not only the tri-coloured flag, but also those of Spain and Holland united to it. The clouds are collecting, and the tempest rolls toward us. The danger of an invasion, with which we have been so frequently amused, seems to be no longer a visionary menace, or a Ministerial engine to mould the country to its purpose; but is real and palpable, and may possibly be realized before the termination of the next campaign. We may have to pay, with our properties at home, for the extortions of our Officers abroad.

Certainly the situation of this country has not been so critical since the expected invasion of the Spanish Armada, as it is at this instant. Ministers do not affect to dissemble their ap-

prehensions : their preparations for the increase of our Navy and Army not permitting them to do so ; but proving to a demonstration, that in their minds, we have perils of no common magnitude to encounter. Let us not therefore, by sanctioning depredation, provoke it : but let us shew that we feel indignant, and are determined to punish the delinquency wherever it originated.

It is a lamentable circumstance, that the British Army has scarcely ever appeared, of late years, in any country, without making its presence felt by acts which have revolted those with whom we have come in contact, whether friends or foes. I speak not of the East Indies, because pillage has been there practised from time immemorial. It is established by long precedent and common usage, and has ceased to be a luxury by becoming a necessity of nature. The evil is rooted in the Oriental soul, and readily transmigrates into those of every European who arrives among them. On the Continent of America, in the last war, where we were contending in support of the supremacy of the metropolis ; and though policy dictated not only to spare our partizans, but to conciliate our enemies, by abstaining from excesses, we neither spared nor conciliated ; but if American reports, made long after the season
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of resentment has passed, are to be relied upon, we plundered and outraged both indiscriminately, and irreconcilably exasperated those whom we could not subdue. In St. Eustatius, how we acted, has already been mentioned. In Flanders and Holland—we have heard of the misbehaviour of our troops; and though report may exaggerate in that, as in most other cases, yet we cannot deny that there was some foundation for the charge; as we see it repeated in the Orders of the Commander in Chief, denouncing the severest penalties against the delinquents. In the case of the French Islands, the public are in possession of the facts which relate to them; and have a right to know in whom these disgraceful measures originated, whether in the orders and instructions of the Ministers of this Country, or in the Officers who were charged with the expedition. An inquiry is necessary both to exculpate the innocent, and to ascertain to whom the delinquency is to attach; for it is only by the energetic Declaration of Parliament, that the stigma is to be effaced from the national character, now polluted by such odious vexations.

I have declined mentioning the transactions subsequent to the descent of the Republicans at Point a Petre, Guadaloupe, because I know not
that

that they have any immediate reference to the conduct of our Commanders, in the instance in question. The impotence of the Army, which had been consumed by the diseases of the climate, and left unrecruited by the supineness of Ministers, was undoubtedly the principal cause of their not being dislodged from Grand-Terre ; but at the same time, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that the harsh and exasperating proceedings of the army at Martinico had alarmed Guadeloupe also ; and, by disgusting the inhabitants, had paved the way for the subsequent operations of the Republican adventurers, and greatly facilitated their success.

As to St. Lucia, the same measures that had been adopted at Martinico, took place there also, and were urged to their end with still more rigour ; the demand of a Contribution not being a sterile menace, but was really acted upon, and a sum levied of many thousands of pounds ; of how many, I have no document that can authorize me to say. The instance, however, fully obviates a declaration which I understand has been made, that no Contribution was raised. If the sum paid by the inhabitants of St. Lucia be called a free gift, as it has been said to be, it is just such a free gift as the hunted beaver, in the fable confers on the dogs that pursue him.

Three

Three hundred thousand pounds are said to be the sum demanded from that Island, whose net annual income does not exceed the half of it; and the half was offered by way of compromise, and a part of it paid.

If the Contribution was not actually levied upon Martinico, it was because the inhabitants, being destitute of the means, demurred to the demand, until time was given for representations to be made in this country, and for an order inhibiting the levy to reach them in season to prevent the confiscation threatened.

But it is not enough to arrest the execution of an unjust order. We have seen the principle of Confiscation advanced, and carried into effect in St. Eustatius, in the former war, and we never see it revived in the Proclamations of our Commanders, in the French Islands. It is therefore time that it should be settled for ever, whether the property of the inhabitants of a captured Island shall or shall not be subject to confiscation. It imports greatly to the West Indian interest, to know precisely the situation on which they stand; for exposed as the Sugar Colonies are to the enterprises of an enemy, which their own internal means are unable to repel, if the principle be recognised, or if it be not disclaimed and disavowed

disavowed by authority, their position would be deplorable indeed ; as it would differ in nothing, from that of persons who embark their adventures in perilous bottoms of wood, but in their requiring a somewhat larger force to subdue them.

If exception be taken to the question in the general abstract state in which it is put, and a distinction should be attempted to be made between places taken by assault and by capitulation, — I say, that whether one or the other, will make no material difference, as the towns and the country are ever open to be taken without a capitulation ; and there only the plunder is to be found, the Fortresses possessing only ammunition and cannon.

But it will not be enough to do away the principle of the assumed right of Confiscation, unless we annul that also of imposing contributions, which would be equivalent to it ; and we shall even then be far short of the remedy, while we leave the measures that resulted from those principles, uncensured and unpunished ; not merely in the odium of the public which a man may possess many years (if he be rich) without knowing he has it, but by some more palpable testimony of disapprobation.

If

If the services of our soldiers should at any time be such as to be thought to entitle them to a more ample recompence than their regular pay, I feel no objection to their receiving it from the Treasury of the State ; but I shudder at the idea of their being allowed to carve a reward, with their swords, out of their conquests. For what disorders would not that indulgence create in the world ? It would carry us back some centuries into barbarism, and revive scenes, from the perusal of which the mind now turns with abhorrence, for it was upon that principle that the Buccaneers of America acted in the last age ; but the Buccaneers were a lawless banditti, the outcasts and refuse of every nation, not a force amenable to the civil controul of any government ; and therefore no government was particularly responsible for their atrocities.

In pursuing the reflections to which the present question gives birth, I meet irresistible evidence of this predatory principle, originating in another, radically as bad, though it is too precious to a maritime state, like ours, to be oppugned with success ; and that is, the right of capturing at sea the ships of individuals conveying, in a peaceable manner, private property not administering aliment to war. As well may a sudden irruption into an enemy's country authorise the seizure of

the effects of the unarmed inhabitants of a village, and the harmless traveller, as those of men inoffensively proceeding by water with objects merely commercial. But I know very well, that though the human mind be progressive in the attainment of light, it is impossible for it to enter where interest shuts our eyelids. We know where our strength lies, and we profit of it's effect, without suffering any uneasy scruple as to the morality of the means. In the late war, when our West Indian Islands were taken by the French, our ships of war seized upon the property of our countrymen, with as little remorse as they would that of any natural born enemy; so forcible is habit when uncontrouled by law.

But though their disposition to maritime plunder be productive of too many political advantages, to permit of its being totally annihilated, yet the same argument of interest cannot with propriety be urged for the extension of the principle to the land also, for we have an enemy that will probably emerge from the present contest more formidable than ever; and we should be careful not to suffer precedents to be established that may operate to our prejudice. Our Navy, it is true, is at present, and has long been superior to that of France; yet a momentary inferiority, in any quarter, may allow them to
take

take signal vengeance on us by ruinous depredations.

As to the French Colonies, which have given occasion to the above unpleasant remarks, it is not very probable that they will long remain under our dominion. Guadaloupe has been already retaken, and if greater vigilance shall preserve the others to us during the war, we have reason to think that they will be restored to France at the conclusion of it. Indeed it is not improbable that they may return to it much sooner, and that too by the active co-operation of their inhabitants, whose affections have been alienated by our misconduct. At present they are forced to adhere to us by the rigorous decrees of the Convention, which have freed their slaves, and left them no alternative but total ruin, or the British Government. The moderation of the present rulers of the Convention, evinced by the repeal of so many sanguinary laws, and their amnesty to the insurgents in Brittany and La Vendee, encourages a hope that they have seen their errors, and that they will at length, as far as they can, repair the injustice which has been done to their Sugar Colonies. The deputation of Commissioners lately named to the West Indies, seems to indicate that such a design is in

contemplation. If so, we may soon see the inhabitants of the French Islands more our enemies than they are now our friends; and it will then be time to think rather of protecting our own Islands from contributions, than of levying them upon theirs.

A P P E N D I X,

No. I.

G. R.

DECLARATION.

JANUARY 1, 1794.

THE Assembly, stiling themselves the National Convention of France, having, in the said Kingdom and its Dependencies, exercised the most boundless and ferocious despotism, destroyed religion, government, and laws, violated all sorts of property, and to so many crimes added a Declaration to plunge other nations into the same calamities, to overthrow their respective Constitutions, and the fundamental principles of all civilized States ; and, in order to attain their end, not satisfied with making use of dark manœuvres, incendiaries and secret emissaries have gone the length of committing overt hostilities, and declaring an unprovoked War against His Britannic

tanic Majesty and his Allies ; and his said Majesty having thereby been forced to have recourse to arms, and to pursue a just and necessary War for the protection of his subjects, the safety of his throne, the preservation of the British Constitution, and the defence of his Allies.

The King considering also, that, according to public notoriety, the said Convention, and its adherents, among other atrocious projects, have conceived that of totally destroying the French Colonies in the West India Islands, a project which, in some places, they have executed under the most horrid circumstances, and by the most wicked and abominable means; and that, at the same time, they have manifested similar intentions against his Majesty's possessions in this part of the world.

In order, in the promptest and most efficacious manner, to check the execution of those designs, and to protect his own Colonies from the misfortunes by which they are threatened, His Majesty, relying on the protection of Providence, the valour of his subjects, and the justice of his cause, has thought it convenient and necessary, by force of arms, *to subdue the adherents of the aforesaid pretended National Convention, and to re-*
cue

cue the Island of Martinico from the misfortunes and oppression under which it groans.

In consequence whereof, We, the undersigned Commanders in Chief of His Britannic Majesty's Land and Sea Forces, in the West Indies, by virtue of the powers, which from His Majesty we have received to that effect, *invite all the Friends of Peace, Government, Religion, and Order, in the Island of Martinico, to shake off the yoke of a tyrannical oppression, and to shelter themselves from the horrors of anarchy, under the protection and government of a just and benevolent Sovereign.*

And by the present, solemnly promise, grant, and insure, to all those who, availing themselves of this invitation, in a quiet and peaceable manner, shall submit to the authority of the King, and put themselves under His Majesty's protection, personal safety, as well as *a full and immediate enjoyment of all their lawful property, according to their ancient laws and customs, and on the most advantageous terms*, those persons alone excepted, whose removal should be found necessary for the safety of the Island; and even to persons of this description, whatever may have been their conduct, we promise a safe conveyance to France, or any other place they may choose, without injury to the King's service : We
further

further promise, that at the restoration of peace, the said Island of Martinico shall enjoy all the commercial rights and privileges, which are enjoyed by the Colonies of His Britannic Majesty in the West Indies : We promise also, to all persons, (the above-mentioned alone excepted) who, in the aforesaid manner, peaceably submitting, shall conduct themselves as good and lawful subjects of His Majesty, a full and unlimited amnesty for every act they may have committed under colour or pretence of any authority whatever, exercised previous to the publication of the present, securing them thereby against all prosecutions and molestations on account of acts proceeding from an authority unlawfully assumed.

All such persons as, in contempt of His Majesty's gracious and benevolent intention, should dare to oppose this Declaration, shall be treated as enemies, and remain exposed to all the evils which the operations of war cannot fail to bring over their persons and property.

Given on Board his Majesty's Ship the Boyne,
on the 1st of January, 1794.

(Signed) CHARLES GREY, General.
JOHN JERVIS, Vice-Admiral.

By order of their Excellencies,

(Signed) G. FISHER, } Secretaries.
GEO. PURVIS, }

No. II.

By Order of the Right Honourable THOMAS DUNDAS, Major-General in His BRITANNIC MAJESTY's Army, commanding the conquered Part of the North of this Island.

ALL Merchants, Captains of Vessels, Factors, and others, either French or Foreigners, having in their possession, within the circumference of this town of St. Pierre, Colonial productions and provisions, of whatever kind and quality, are hereby ordered, to-morrow morning, between eleven and twelve o'clock, to deliver, without fail, an exact, true, and verified specification thereof to Mr. BAILLIE, at the Head-quarters, at the Intendant's Hotel, under pain of imprisonment against the transgressors, and *confiscation of the goods not declared*; and the persons above-mentioned must take care, in the said specification, to set down the name of the proprietors of the above merchandize, the warehouses where they are laid up, and the street where the said warehouses are situated.

At St. Pierre, Martinico, on the nineteenth of February, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four.

THOMAS DUNDAS,
Major-General.

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DECLA-

DECLARATION.

No. III.

ALL persons named hereafter, who, to the Agents of the Army and Navy, have delivered signed specifications of the quantity of commodities, provisions, &c. &c. at this time actually existing in their different warehouses, are hereby informed, that, taking into consideration the decay and waste, to which several articles, included in the above specifications, are subject, the solicitations of the town and country with respect to provision, We herewith grant them leave to dispose of the undermentioned articles, and to sell them to whom they please, and at such a price as they think proper, *on express condition, that they shall remain answerable to the said Agents*, and account, as often as shall be required, for the value thereof, at the rate hereafter mentioned, as it was fixed by Government on the 26th of February last.

Given in the Head-quarters at St. Pierre, on the eleventh of March, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-four.

(Signed) W. MYERS,

Colonel, commanding His Britannic Majesty's Forces in the Town of St. Pierre, and its Dependencies.

GOD SAVE THE KING!

ARTICLES, THE SALE OF WHICH IS PERMITTED.

Price fixed by Government		
American Beef,	<i>Liv.</i> 99	B.
Salt Pork,	132	Ditto.
Cod Fish,	36	Ditto.
Herrings,	33	Ditto.
Mackerel,	25	Ditto.
Salmon,	50	Ditto.
Butter,	132	Ditto.
Hog's Lard,	100	Ditto.
Candles,	1 10	per lb.
Soap,	1 10	per lb.
Oil,	132	Cask.
Wine, of the first Quality,	330	Hogshead
Wine, of the second,	264	Ditto.
Coast Wine,	198	Ditto.
Flour,	66	Barrel.
Rice,	36	Ditto.
Peas and Beans,	33	Ditto.
Biscuit,	41 5	Ditto.

ADVERTISEMENT.

No. IV.

ORDERED by the present, that a public Sale of all the Vessels, Commodities, Provisions, and other Articles, which are already, or shall be seized in the Island of *Martinico*, is to be held

on the tenth of next April, and following Days, to which the Inhabitants of the different Islands are herewith invited.

Persons; desirous of becoming Purchasers, are hereby informed, that they will be obliged to deposit immediately 30 per Cent. in specie, and that the remaining sum is to be paid, at latest, within the following twenty days, in ready Cash, or Bills of Exchange, approved of by the Agents of the Army and Navy.

St. Pierre, Martinico, March 18th, 1794.

MARTINICO.

PROCLAMATION.

No. V.

SIR CHARLES GREY and SIR JOHN JERVIS, Commanders in Chief of His Britannic Majesty's Land and Sea Forces in the Windward Islands, having resolved, that all the Provisions, and other Articles, heretofore declared to the Agents of Seizures in the town of St. Pierre, shall be publicly sold for the profit of those who have seized them, all persons, having made such declarations, are herewith ordered, as soon as the aforesaid Agents shall desire it, to deliver up the Provisions

sions and other Articles thus declared.—All Persons, that have hitherto neglected to make similar declarations, are also ordered, at their risk and peril, to make them without any further delay.

Given, signed with my own Hand, and sealed with my Arms, Head Quarters, on the tenth of April, One thousand seven hundred and ninety-four.

ROBERT PRESCOTT.

By order of the General,

B. CLIFTON, *Secretary*.

PROCLAMATION.

No. VI.

THE Agents of Seizures having represented to me, that at the Sale of Commodities seized at the Town of St. Pierre, a considerable deficiency has been found in the quantities delivered, which, in their opinion, originates from the long space of time elapsed since the delivery of the specifications thereof; the inhabitants of the said Town of St. Pierre are herewith ordered, next Monday morning, the 28th instant, to deliver to the above Agents, an exact specification of the productions of the Colony, at this time actually existing

existing in their houses and warehouses, for which they are to remain answerable at their own peril and hazard. A general Sale shall hereafter take place; and if it should then appear, that any goods have been concealed, those that are guilty thereof shall be severely punished.

All such persons as have sold commodities, or non-manufactured Tobacco, are also ordered to deliver, without any delay, to the Agents of Seizures, an account of the sums received.

St. Pierre, Martinico, April 26th, 1794.

(Signed) ROBERT PRESCOTT,
Lieutenant-General.

By the Governor's order,

(Signed) B. CLIFTON, *Secretary.*

MARTINICO.

PROCLAMATION,

No. VII.

*By His Excellency ROBERT PRESCOTT, Esq.
Lieutenant-General of His BRITANNIC MAJES-
TY'S Forces, Governor and Commander in Chief
of the Island of MARTINICO, and its Depen-
cies.*

THE Inhabitants of the different quarters of
the Island of *Martinico* are desired to meet in
their

their respective Parishes, for the purpose of choosing, by ballot, for their Representative, an intelligent person of known integrity ; and those Deputies, after they are chosen, are requested to assemble next Sunday, the 18th Instant, in the Town of *Fort Royal*, to meet the Commissaries appointed by their Excellencies Sir Charles Grey, K. B. and Admiral Sir John Jervis, K. B. for the purpose of fixing, in an equitable and efficacious manner, a general contribution (the amount of which shall be made known to the Representative of each Parish), to be paid by all those who possess property in the Colony ; the Commanders in Chief having decided, that such an arrangement would be much more *convenient than a general confiscation* ; other matters concerning the welfare of the Colony will also be proposed to them.

Given at the Govenor's House at St. Pierre, on the tenth of May, One thousandseven hundred and ninety-four, in the thirty-fourth year of His Majesty's Reign.

(Signed) ROBERT PRESCOTT.

By order of the General.

(Signed) B. CLIFTON, *Secretary*.

PROCLAMATION.

No. VIII.

By Order of their Excellencies, General SIR CHARLES GREY, and Admiral SIR JOHN JERVIS, Commanders in Chief of His Britannic Majest's Fleets and Armies in the West Indies.

No attention having been paid to the Proclamation of the Tenth Instant, issued by His Excellency General Prescott, desiring all the good people of this Colony to assemble in their respective Parishes and Quarters, for the purpose of choosing persons of known intelligence, and approved integrity, to represent them in an Assembly, which, according to the said Proclamation, was to be held at Fort Royal, Sunday, the eighteenth Instant, to meet the Commissaries appointed and duly authorized by the Commanders in Chief, and to confer with them on the most equitable and most expeditious way and means to raise a sum of money adequate to the value of the conquest, destined to reward the valour, to compensate the excessive fatigues, and, their consequences, sickness and mortality, and to make good the heavy expence, incurred by the British Officers, Soldiers, and Sailors, who,
with

with unshaken firmness, and matchless perseverance, have atchieved the conquest of this Island, subjected it to the British Government, rescued from a wretched exile the greatest number of its inhabitants, and restored them to the *quiet possession of their property*, the confiscation of which had already been decreed :

And the procrastination of this general arrangement being the cause which prevents many well-disposed inhabitants from carrying their commodities to market, and procuring themselves what is necessary for their habitations, to the obvious prejudice of the whole Colony.

The Commanders in Chief, in order to remove an evil of such importance, and which is daily increasing, enact and ordain as follows :

I.

The Civil Commissaries, each in his respective Parish, are to draw up and deliver, as soon as possible, exact lists of the Habitations situated in the said Parishes, containing the number of Slaves, Cattle, Acres of Land, Buildings, and Plantations, an estimate of each of those objects, and a specification of all sorts of productions, made and gathered on each estate, wherein ought to be distinguished those that,

bonâ fide, had been made and collected before the twenty-third of last March.

II.

The Civil Commissaries in the Parishes of the the different Towns and Boroughs are likewise to draw up and deliver a list of the Houses, Slaves, and Servants, to be found in the said Towns and Boroughs, stating the Proprietors thereof, the yearly rent of each house, and enumerating all sorts of property, comprised under the denomination of Goods, Commodities, or Merchandize, in the said Towns and Boroughs.

III.

The Civil Commissaries are also ordered, in their respective Quarters, to demand the ledgers, and all account-books, notes and deeds belonging to Captains or Agents of the French Trade, as well as an exact account of all sorts of Property, falling under the description of vacant succession in each quarter of the Colony, with a correct inventory of all the Goods, Effects, and Chattels, belonging to such persons as have been taken arms in hand, or killed during the Siege, or banished the Island : and further, a *specification of all Property belonging to persons of any description whatever, residing in France.*

IV.

IV.

The Civil Commissaries are to name in their Reports, all persons, without exception, that should delay giving in the different specifications required, or be suspected of making a false declaration, or fail to give the usual assistance, necessary for the exactness and impartiality of reports of that kind ; it being the intention and wish, that the intended levy be made in the most equitable manner, and in exact proportion with the means of each individual.

V.

The said reports are to be made with all possible expedition, so that on Saturday, the thirty-first instant, or sooner, they may be delivered by the Civil Commissaries to the Commissioners appointed to receive them, and who, for this purpose, will repair either to the Intendant's Hotel at St. Pierre, or to the Governor's house at Fort Royal ; the Commanders in Chief having, on their part, manifested their *ardent wish* to adopt the *mildest measures*, declare *herewith*, that it is their *firm resolution* to have this *present measure fully executed*, or, on failure of it, to *avail themselves of the power with which they are invested*, to order and enforce a general *Confiscation*.

Given

Given under our Signature, on board the
Boyne, Fort Royal Bay, on the twenty-first of
May, the Year of our Saviour, One thousand
seven hundred and ninety-four, and the thirty-
fourth Year of His Majesty's Reign.

(Signed) CHARLES GREY.

JOHN JERVIS.

By Order of their Excellencies,

(Signed) G. FISHER,

G. PURVIS.

FINIS.



ERRATA.

Page 13, line 16, for Culots read Culottes.

37, — 8, for leveid read levied.

41, — 3, for elapse read lapse.

42, — 18, for spoliation read spoliation.

47, — 16, for never read now.

58, — 16, for their read this.